

Application No. 10/804,604
Response Dated December 4, 2006
Reply to Office Action of June 5, 2006

Amendments of the Claims

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the subject application:

1. (Original) A method of augmenting a soft tissue in a body comprising:

selecting an active augmenting agent;

depositing the active augmenting agent at locations in the soft tissue to be augmented.

2. (Original) The method according to claim 1 wherein the active augmenting agent comprises magnetizable particles.

3. (Original) The method according to claim 2 wherein the magnetizable particles are suspended in a composition containing biocompatible carrier.

4. (Original) The method according to claim 2 wherein the magnetizable particles include a surface modifier.

5. (Original) The method according to claim 2 wherein the magnetizable particles are magnetically active prior to depositing into the tissue.

6. (Original) The method according to claim 2 wherein the magnetizable particles are unmagnetized when

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deposited into the tissue and subsequently magnetized after depositing.

7. (Original) The method according to claim 2 wherein the magnetizable particles are about 30 to 3000 microns in size.

8. (Original) The method according to claim 7 wherein the magnetizable particles are about 80 to 600 microns in size.

9. (Original) The method according to claim 2 wherein the active augmenting agent comprises magnetizable rods.

10. (Original) The method according to claim 1 wherein the tissue is a submucosal tissue surrounding a body lumen.

11. (Original) The method according to claim 10 wherein the lumen is a urethra.

12. (Original) The method according to claim 10 wherein the lumen is the rectum.

13. (Original) The method according to claim 1 wherein the active augmenting agent is deposited through a needle passed into the tissue.

14. (Original) A method for forming a sphincter surrounding a portion of a body lumen, the method comprising a

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step of injecting an active augmenting agent into tissue surrounding the lumen.

15. (Original) The method according to claim 14 wherein the active augmenting agent comprises magnetizable particles.

16. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 14 15 wherein the magnetizable particles are suspended in a composition containing a carrier.

17. (Original) The method according to claim 16 wherein the magnetizable particles include a surface modifier.

18. (Original) The method according to claim 15 wherein the magnetizable particles are magnetically active when injected into the tissue.

19. (Original) The method according to claim 15 wherein the magnetizable particles are unmagnetized when injected into the tissue and subsequently magnetized after injection.

20. (Original) The method according to claim 15 wherein the magnetizable particles are about 30 to 3000 microns in size.

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21. (Original) The method according to claim 20 wherein the magnetizable particles are about 80 to 600 microns in size.

22. (Original) The method according to claim 14 wherein the bodily lumen is the urethra.

23. (Original) An active augmenting agent comprising: a plurality of magnetizable particles; and a biocompatible carrier.

24. (Original) The active augmenting agent according to claim 23 further comprising a surface modifier.

25. (Original) The active augmenting agent according to claim 23 wherein the biocompatible carrier is saline.

26. (Original) The active augmenting agent according to claim 23 wherein the biocompatible carrier is a polyvinylpyrrolidone.

27. (Original) The active agent according to claim 24 wherein the surface modifier is a polyvinylpyrrolidone.

28. (Original) The active augmenting agent according to claim 24 wherein the surface modifier includes a selected one of a hyaluronic acid or a hyaluronate.

29. (Previously presented) A method of urging a patient's body tissue passageway toward closure comprising:

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implanting mutually attracting magnetic bodies in the patient's body at locations that are circumferential of the passageway.

30. (Previously presented) The method defined in claim 29 wherein the locations include first and second locations that are adjacent respective opposite sides of the passageway.

31. (Previously presented) The method defined in claim 29 further comprising:

selecting the magnetic bodies so that their mutual magnetic attraction force is less than an opening force exerted on the passageway by a particular physiological occurrence.

32. (Previously presented) The method defined in claim 29 where the implanting is performed so that at least two of the magnetic bodies can move toward and away from one another.

33. (Previously presented) The method defined in claim 32 wherein the at least two magnetic bodies tend to move toward one another in response to mutual magnetic attraction.

34. (Previously presented) The method defined in claim 33 wherein the at least two magnetic bodies can move away

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from one another in response to a physiological occurrence in the patient's body.

35. (Previously presented) The method defined in claim 29 wherein the implanting of at least one of the magnetic bodies is at least in part in tissue of the passageway.

36. (Previously presented) The method defined in claim 29 wherein the implanting of at least one of the magnetic bodies is at least in part radially outside a lumen of the passageway.

37. (Previously presented) The method defined in claim 29 wherein the implanting comprises:

introducing at least one of the magnetic bodies into the patient's body via tubular instrumentation.

38. (Previously presented) The method defined in claim 29 wherein the implanting comprises:

introducing tubular instrumentation into the patient's body;

passing at least one of the magnetic bodies into the patient's body through the tubular instrumentation; and

withdrawing the tubular instrumentation from the patient's body.

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39. (Previously presented) The method defined in claim 29 wherein the body tissue is an esophagus.

40. (Previously presented) The method defined in claim 29 wherein the body tissue is a urethra.

41. (Previously presented) The method defined in claim 29 wherein the body tissue is an anal sphincter.

42. (Previously presented) A method of urging a patient's body tissue passageway toward closure comprising:

implanting mutually attracting permanent magnetic bodies in the patient's body at locations that are spaced from one another circumferentially about the passageway.

43. (Previously presented) A method of urging a patient's body tissue passageway toward closure comprising:

implanting at least two mutually attracting permanent magnetic bodies in the patient's body at respective locations that are spaced from one another circumferentially about the passageway.

44. (New) The method of claim 29 wherein:
the implanting comprises placing first, second and third magnetic dipoles substantially within an annulus that has a circumference;

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the first and second dipoles being attracted to each other by a first force acting along the circumference;

the second and third dipoles being attracted to each other by a second force acting along the circumference; and

the first and second forces being of such magnitudes that the circumference increases to allow matter to pass through the passageway and decreases after the matter passes through the passageway.

45. (New) The method of claim 44 further comprising estimating a first radial mechanical force, the radial force being applied by the annulus to tissue adjacent the passageway.

46. (New) The method of claim 45 further comprising configuring the dipoles such that the annulus has a maximum radial mechanical force that is less than the first radial mechanical force.

47. (New) The method of claim 45 further comprising configuring the dipoles such that the annulus has a maximum radial mechanical force that is substantially the same as the first radial mechanical force.